

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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O R 081145Z MAR 75
FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1669
INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L KABUL 1467

EXDIS

REF: STATE 50422

1. REFTEL ARRIVED KABUL SUBSEQUENT TO MY CONVERSATION WITH DAOUD REPORTED IN KABUL 1449. I DO NOT EXPECT ANOTHER OPPORTUNITY TO SEE DAOUD UNTIL AFTER HIS RETURN FROM HIS TRIP TO INDIA, BANGLADESH AND IRAQ AND PROBABLY NOT UNTIL AFTER THE AFGHAN NEW YEAR'S HOLIDAYS WHICH BEGIN MARCH 21.

2. IN ANY CASE, AS MENTIONED IN MY COMMENT IN KABUL 1449. I DO NOT THINK THAT WE CAN REALISTICALLY EXPECT THE AFGHANS TO REDUCE THE TONE OR VOLUME OF PROPAGANDA UNTIL THE GOP MAKES SOME CONCILIATORY GESTURE IN THE NWFP AND/OR BALUCHISTAN. I HAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT THE GOA HAS GONE OUT OF ITS WAY SINCE THE SHERPAO ASSASSINATION AND THE ROUND-UP OF THE NAP LEADERSHIP TO AVOID ACTIONS, SUCH AS DEMONSTRATIONS AGAINST THE PAKISTANI EMBASSY HERE, WHICH MIGHT CAUSE THE GOP TO CLOSE THE BORDER. TAKE MILITARY ACTION OR OTHERWISE ESCALATE THE TENSIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. THE GOA HAS TAKEN THIS STANCE BECAUSE IT REALIZES THAT SUCH AN ESCALATION WOULD CAUSE SERIOUS DAMAGE TO AFGHANISTAN AND BECAUSE IT IS REALISTICALLY AWARE OF ITS INABILITY GREATLY TO AFFECT THE COURSE OF EVENTS ON THE OTHER
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SIDE OF THE BORDER. THE GOA NEVERTHELESS HAD TO

AND MUST CONTINUE FOR ITS OWN INTERNAL POLITICAL REASONS TO REACT TO BHUTTO'S REPRESSIVE MEASURES AND THE ONLY SAFE FORM OF REACTION IS PROGAPANDA.

3. ANOTHER FACTOR WE SHOULD BEAR IN MIND IS THAT THE GOA IS NOT ONLY UPSET WITH US FOR LIFTING THE ARMS EMBARGO TO PAKISTAN BUT ALSO BECAUSE OF THIS CHANGE IN POLICY WAS ANNOUNCED WHILE BHUTTO WAS CLAMPING DOWN ON THE NAP. THE AFGHAN LEADERSHIP PROBABLY BELIEVES THAT OUR ACTION MADE IT EASIER FOR BHUTTO TO TAKE THE STEPS HE HAS TAKEN. WE WILL HAVE TO LIVE WITH THE FACT THAT OUR ABILITY TO INFLUENCE AFGHAN POLICIES TOWARDS PAKISTAN HAS THEREFORE DIMINISHED SOMEWHAT FOR THE TIME BEING, ALTHOUGH THE AFGHANS WILL CONTINUE SERIOUSLY TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT OUR VIEWS.

4. WHILE WE AGREE WITH REFTEL THAT WE SHOULD CONTINUE TO ENCOURAGE GOA/GOP CONTACTS AND A DIMINUTION OF VITUPERATIVE PROPAGANDA, SUCH EFFORTS SHOULD BE UNDERTAKEN IN THE CONTEXT OF THE FOREGOING. DAOUD'S STATEMENT TO ME THAT THERE WAS A MISUNDERSTANDING BETWEEN SENATOR PERCY AND NAIM IS ANOTHER WAY OF SAYING THAT THE IDEA OF A MUTUAL REDUCTION OF PROPAGANDA BY ITSELF IS MOOT FOR THE TIME BEING.

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